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THE CLOSET DRAMA.

That stern guardian of the virtues of dramatic art, Professor Brander Matthews, has long been exercised over the pretensions of the literary play — that is, of the play which is written to be read rather than to be acted. The closet drama, as it is frequently styled, has become a recognized species of our literature, and has acquired an important position through the eminence of those English writers who, during the past hundred years or so, have in part devoted their energies to its composition. But our critic will none of it; he calls it a "bastard-hybrid" and other offensive names, and, not content with keeping it confined within its closet, he exhibits a ferocious desire to end its existence altogether. So zealous a gaoler (how he will love that spelling!) needs to be watched himself, lest his innocent captive be secretly done to death, or, if perchance its life be spared, its reputation (that immediate jewel of the soul) be blasted forever.

It is against Professor Beers, in particular, that our knight has couched his lance, and the arena of the tourney is found in the February "North American Review," while a sort of side-show is provided for the entertainment of readers of the "Atlantic" in its issue of the same month. Professor Beers having rashly asserted that "the play house has no monopoly of the dramatic form," and having further expressed the opinion that "the English closet-drama of the nineteenth century is an important body of literature, of higher intellectual value than all the stage-plays produced in England during the same period," a challenge became inevitable, and was promptly delivered. The contest rages about a list of works that includes Byron's "Manfred," George Eliot's "Spanish Gypsy," Arnold's "Empedocles on Etna," Tennyson's "Becket," Browning's "Pippa Passes," Swinburne's "Atalanta," and Landor's "Gebir," although we do not quite see what the last-named epic is doing in *cette galere*.

These, of course, are only a few typical examples of the great number of works cast in the dramatic mould that have a secure position in our nineteenth-century literature. The list, properly amplified, would seem to the plain man fully to justify the claims made by Mr. Beers

for this category of creative work. Nor does Mr. Matthews deny outright the importance of the poems in question. But he seeks to minimise the significance of the list by eliminating from it two kinds of plays—those that their authors really hoped might be acted, and those that are no more than imitations of ancient models—and then disposing of the rest by remarking that they might be blotted out of existence “without greatly impairing the renown of the English poets who have condescended to the poem in dialogue.” “Condescended” is good, but it seems to beg the question; the demolition is very neat, in theory, but somehow it leaves “Becket” and “Atalanta” and “Manfred” with all their old compelling power upon our imagination. We recall the stage presentation of “Becket” as one of the most impressive we have ever seen; we think enviously of the London audience that was privileged to witness “Atalanta” not long ago, and we are by no means sure that a performance of “Manfred” would not be the occasion of a joyous experience—its joy perhaps enhanced by the knowledge that it was counted illegitimate by the doctrinaires of dramaturgy.

Mr. Beers reminds us that the closet dramatist has “a freer hand than the professional playwright,” pointing out the obvious advantages of a form that “has not need to sacrifice truth of character and probability of plot to the need of highly accentuated situations,” and that is not constrained to make swift development of dramatic action the be-all and end-all of its aim. The position seems to us impregnable; certainly it is not carried by assault by hurling such epithets as “wilful perversity,” “shrinking weakling,” and “anarchists in art” at its defenders. Mr. Matthews is a warm admirer of French dramatic literature and a recognized authority upon the subject, but the canons of criticism which lead him to condemn the English closet-drama would, if logically applied, condemn also the masterpieces of Corneille and Racine. There is no place for *récits de Thérèse* in the legitimate drama as he now seeks to circumscribe its activities. His narrow definition admits Molière alone of the three great Frenchmen, and leaves much of Hugo and Goethe, and no little of Shakespeare, in the outer darkness. The stage-scene in which there is “nothing doing” is his pet abhorrence, for he ignores the possibility that there may be a great deal “doing” in the mind of the listening spectator. For our own part, we confess to have derived acute pleasure from the stage deliverance

of Faust's opening monologue, the parable of “Nathan der Weise,” the invocation to the spirit of Charlemagne in “Hernani,” the scathing denunciation of the courtiers in “Ruy Blas,” and many a *tirade* of classical French tragedy. We might possibly balk at John Knox's sermon in “Bothwell,” but are not quite sure of even that, never having been put to the test. And, to take the most conspicuous of modern instances, we would rather witness a performance of Ibsen's “Brand” than a wilderness of “Doll Houses” and “Hedda Gablers.”

To this point, we are prepared to defend the legitimacy of the stage-play that does not limit its effects to crisp dialogue and swiftly-moving action. These things are well, but the play is dust and ashes that does not also provide its seasons of *recueillement* and aim at something more than excitement. The modern English stage has deliberately divorced itself from literature, and has no reason to complain because literature chooses to preserve for itself whatever traditions and habits of the old alliance it may still find fitted for its purpose. That the divorce proceedings have been instituted by the stage is practically admitted by Mr. Matthews. He says: “The drama has cast out all that is undramatic and it now has no room for anything but the action and the characters. It is compacter than ever before; and it rejects not only description but also narrative.” Precisely so. But the poet, whose claim upon the dramatic form is primary, refuses to abandon that form to the commercialized mercies of the stage-manager, and, with strange perversity, refuses also to write for the stage under such limitations. The great Greeks and the great Frenchmen and the great Germans and the great Englishmen of our one great dramatic epoch found the stage a suitable place for both description and narrative, and the modern Englishman who seeks to follow in their footsteps, although he would willingly make some concessions to stagecraft, is completely alienated by the *non possumus* attitude of the manager. Thus freed to follow his own devices, he produces literature that is dramatic in semblance, but that takes little thought of exits and entrances and stage groupings, or of histrionism in general. His work is given to the world in the form of “The Cenci,” or of “Count Julian,” or of “Philip van Artevelde,” and this is the closet drama the right of which to exist Mr. Matthews so stoutly denies.

Our critic speaks no more than the truth when he says that “behind every appearance of the closet drama we can discover a latent con-

tempt for the actual theatre," but few will follow him in discovering as well "a desire to claim its rewards." It may be held as a pious opinion by the closet dramatist that the ideally-constituted theatre of some utopian realm would reward his work in the measure of its beauty and truth, but he knows full well that his own audience will be one of readers only, and that his own rewards (materially viewed) will come from royalties on books and not on productions. The stage conditions of the last half-century or more have been so utterly discouraging to the serious English writer of dramatic bent that he has taken the only course befitting his dignity, and has written his plays for print alone. He has missed thereby the tribute of nightly applause in the playhouse, but he has cherished instead the consoling thought that his work had a fair chance of living as a part of English literature. And that is the one thing not likely to be asserted concerning the English plays of the same period that have borne, however triumphantly, the test of the footlights.

PERSONALITY VS. WORK.

There is a story of a ship sailing north which sights a huge black rock and in an instant all its sails and iron-work are drawn out and the vessel falls into pieces. Contemporary literary criticism makes shipwreck on the magnetic rock of personality. It cannot keep its steerage way or bearings, or even stay afloat, when confronted by a dominating character.

At first glance it would seem a matter of indifference to the world as to what manner of being it is who presents it with a work of art. We do not inquire of our butchers and bakers and candlestick-makers whether they have red hair and bandy legs, or a Bluebeard closet full of wives, or drain the flowing bowl in their leisure moments. All such facts, if true of literary genius, doubtless have a subtle influence on its work. But it is difficult to trace such influence out. The criticism of gossip, of which Sainte-Beuve was the great modern master, fails utterly to explain the inexplicable genesis of literary creation. It ignores the inspiration, the gift, the unknown power of intellect and feeling which makes all the difference between one man and another. The experience of a genius is paralleled by that of myriads of his fellows. His ability to change this experience into artistic creations is his own.

Biography is one of the most fascinating forms of literature, and the biographies of men of letters are the best of all. When they are both dismissed from life's stage the man of action must yield precedence to the man of thought. A handful of songs can sanctify a whole region; the birthplace of a

great romance writer can draw curious crowds whom a battlefield would leave cold. The danger is that our interest in the makers of literature themselves is likely to take the place of interest in their work. We make pilgrimages to the places where they dwelt, and leave their books unread; we handle the relics of their material life, and forget to be stirred or raised by their spiritual revelations; we talk to rags the circumstances of Shelley's life, while "Adonais" and "Prometheus Unbound" sleep on the shelf; we discuss Poe's inebriety, and forget his art. This might be thought the flattery of fame were it not that scandal is our usual quest. We dig in the dirt like pigs that have been trained to hunt for truffles. Antiquity knew nothing of this insatiate curiosity. It usually gave its poets and thinkers about as many lines of biography as we give volumes. The huge monuments of poetry and philosophy rose in sight of everyone, while the men who reared them were but a name.

But the personality of writers affects contemporaries not by the means of biography, but by actual presence, — by rumor or report or by a sort of *aura* which envelops their works. And this personality may be attractive, repellant, or neutral.

The attractive personality in literature wins his place in human regard by a variety of methods. Sometimes he is the mere voice of the crowd — the personification of its passing moods and desires. He sees, perhaps a little earlier than the rest of mankind, what winds and tides are like to prevail, and steers and spreads his sail for them. He seems to lead, though in reality he follows, like the rest, the impulse of the hour. He is the exponent of the Zeitgeist, and as such very often does a noble and important work. And he is always valuable historically as indicating the direction and interests of the human mind at any given time. Probably the greater number of the heirs of fame are of this kind. They are the favorites of fortune. Like the brazen gate fronting the sun, they receive and render back its rays. Popular poets, novelists, rhetoricians in religion or politics, are all of this kind. The danger they are exposed to is of a too easy success which relaxes the fibre of heroic effort. Their view of life is likely to be shallow and trivial. Or the Zeitgeist of the new age eats up the Zeitgeist of the last, and they are forgotten.

Of a somewhat similar kind are the reformers in literature — who, coming at a time when one good custom has corrupted the world, when the gods have hardened into idols, when formalism has replaced spirituality, gather a revolting crowd about them, burst into the sacred places, and smash the images. Such iconoclasts, if successful, win an even more enthusiastic regard and a greater reward than they who burn incense to the deities in power. A common danger binds their followers to them, and their courage makes them kings. The revolt of Wordsworth and his comrades against the conventional in English literature, and that of Hugo and Dumas in French, are cases in point.

A minor kind of personality which achieves popularity is that of the humorist who does not presume. A writer who makes himself the subject of his own satire, who tacitly assumes the superiority of his readers or audience, is sure to please. The public, proud of patronizing, takes such a personality under its protection. Such humility may be a very noble thing, and when allied with great intellectual power exercises a rightful charm. "I will speak harm of no one save myself of whom I know the most ill," is one of Shakespeare's sweetest speeches. Most of the humorists who have won the hearts of their contemporaries have been deeply imbued with this feeling. One only needs to name Goldsmith, Lamb, and Irving.

Once in a great while a personality appears in literature of such beauty, splendor, or stateliness as to attract all eyes and enthrone himself in the admiration of mankind. In spite of envy and hatred which try to do him wrong, general opinion doffs its cap to him. The world seems to recognize in him a dæmonic character lifted above the ordinary levels of life. It sees in him an incarnation of power and success. Modern Europe has perhaps produced no more than two men of this kind—Goethe and Byron. Voltaire and Swift exercised almost as great a personal influence, but they lacked nearly all the gifts of nature and fortune which those favored two possessed.

Counterfeit presentments of personality there always are in plenty. Many authors and artists, for advertising purposes, adopt eccentricities of dress or manner or character. But such masquerades do not mean much.

The repellant personalities, — the men of genius who in life excite the active dislike of their fellows, who are reviled, persecuted, banished, — number in their ranks many of the greatest names in literature. They are the high and haughty souls, who, confident in their own strength, hold aloof from mankind. They are the logicians who syllogize hateful truths. They are the satirists and dealers in irony. Irony — the appearance of things propitious, the reality of things malign — seems to excite the anger of mankind even more than satire or disdain.

Æschylus, Dante, and Milton are the great exemplars of the kind of genius whose soul is as a star and dwells apart. Their contemporaries were very willing to have them keep their distance, and helped them to do so by persecution and exile. In all such cases of misunderstanding the pity is to be divided between the great figure and his puny fellows. Human beings have their inevitable duties, joys, sorrows, and sins. They tend to drag downward into the darkness and resent being spurred upward into the light. They look to their literary chiefs for sympathy and flattery, and they hate the clarion call which rouses them to high endeavor. Yet when Gulliver appears in Lilliput what can he make of the pygmy multitude? The little messes which satisfy their appetites, the little round of duties which occupy their days, the toys which satisfy their

ambitions, — what are these to him? A type of genius, higher yet, perhaps, than that possessed by the prophetic souls I have named, has known how to reconcile the infinitely great and the immeasurably little. But it has been at the cost, which Dante or Milton would not pay, of sinking its own individuality.

The masters of the ironic strain in literature have been driven to many devices to get any acceptance at all from their audiences. Aristophanes and Rabelais disguised their mockery in filth, yet it is difficult to believe that either of them was personally popular. Defoe wrote an ironical essay on "An Easy Way with Dissenters" which was taken for a plain straightforward proposition. Probably nothing did so much to fix the charge of brutality upon Swift as his suggestion for the economical utilization of Irish infants.

The most mysterious instance of a great character made repellant to his countrymen by subtle irony is that of Cervantes. Here was a hero among heroes, an Hidalgo among Hidalgos, — one almost, to borrow a fine phrase about a more sacred personage, "the first true gentleman who ever lived." He was dowered with sweetness, gentleness, fortitude, patience. His motto was "Patience, and shuffle the cards." Yet he got few honors and scant reward from his native land. The stately Spaniard, accustomed to being flattered to the top of his bent by Lope and Calderon, must have felt that Cervantes was laughing in his sleeve at him. And so he thrust aside the poet who was the incarnation of Spanish courage and courtesy and loftiness of soul.

In one of Keats's most brilliant letters he says that the characteristic of the highest type of literary genius is to have no character at all. It must have no decided domineering force of its own which might interfere with its receptivity to outward impressions. Keats speaks of himself as having been overwhelmed by the personality of a child. The neutral personages of literature are undoubtedly thus made. They sink themselves in their work. They go about the world, as it were, incognito, watching the passions and humors of men, and passively reflecting like a mirror the phenomena of nature and humanity. They are like Apollo among the shepherds of Admetus, like Haroun al-Raschid prowling about the streets of Bagdad in disguise. Of course, back of this seeming passivity of impression, is the mighty mind always at work combining and recreating. And this mind is so mighty, so conscious of its divine power, that it is indifferent to the outward accidents which befall it. How should the man who was meditating "King Lear" feel any personal concern in the intrigues and bustle of the life about him! How should he care whether he had precedence at Court or place in the ranks of the nobles of the day! How should the man who had created Rosalind and Imogen care whether this maid of honor or that city dame smiled upon him or not! We know that he did care to a certain extent for such things, but it is doubtful whether his interest was deep enough to

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make him exert his energies in actual life. Possibly the reason we know so little about him is that there was little to know — that he strove with none, for none was worth his strife. Certainly he made no effort to impress his personality upon his contemporaries. He laughed and drank with his fellows, helped them to their triumphs, accepted good-naturedly his eclipse by Ben Jonson and Fletcher — because, in all probability, he was the only man in that day conscious of the greatness of his work. Can we doubt that Homer, the man, whoever he was, who fused the legends and traditions of the Greek race into one splendid and vital whole, was a being of the same order? We know that Virgil, the perfect artist, was, for we have glimpses of him, shy and secluded, careless of his surroundings, indifferent as to his place in Roman society while he was brooding over the dream which was to make Rome immortal. Horace probably impressed himself a hundred times as much upon the people about him.

Great is the power of personality, — pervasive its charm when it pleases, dreadful its doom when it does not. But, in the main, it is only a temporary force in literature. It speedily fades into tradition or else solidifies into biography, which is a new literary creation. Character is the scaffolding by means of which the houses and palaces and temples of art are erected. When these are done, — unless the architecture is bad indeed, — it is fitting that the beams and timbers which helped in the building should be taken down and the structures themselves revealed to view. The work is, after all, the thing. Personality is an uncertain quantity — the subject of conjecture and interpretation. But work is sure and lasting in its effect — as lasting as the human nature it depicts, as the generations of men who enjoy it. And it is appraisable. The great productions of literature can be brought from the four quarters of the world, from the utmost distances of time, set side by side and judged and placed and ranked.

CHARLES LEONARD MOORE.

CASUAL COMMENT.

THE ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES OF LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT, even in the best of our libraries, and the unceasing demands for more money with which to realize these possibilities, make one aware that the public library is still evolving — has by no means yet reached the stage of stagnant perfection. While Dr. Steiner, of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, of Baltimore, rejoices in the prospect of new branch libraries to add to the present eight, and to be paid for out of Mr. Carnegie's recent generous half-million-dollar gift, he nevertheless longs for a larger and better-appointed central building. In the matter of reading-room alone, he is reported as saying: "I would like to enlarge it and divide it into departments. I would like to make its accommodations greater and better, and I would like to break it up into 'children's,' 'student's,' 'general,' and 'shelf' rooms." Each of these rooms are described by him as he sees them in his mind's eye, and of the last-named he says: "When

I speak of a 'shelf' room I mean one where the books are on the walls unconfined, to be taken by the reader without application to an attendant. This worthy could sit at a little wicket by the door to see that nothing was stolen. Such a room as this would offer the advantages of freedom and wide selection. It is often very annoying to have to go through the formalities that are now in existence here to get books. It quite interrupts your thought sometimes, and puts you out of humor for a long while. Then, when you get what you have applied for, often you don't want it. A hasty glance through the contents convinces you that they are worthless. Then you have to order again and lose much time in the process. All this could be avoided in a 'shelf' room where you could get what you wanted when you wanted it, and where you could be sure always of what you were getting." Careful selection and frequent change of books thus exposed would be necessary, as Dr. Steiner goes on to explain; and further: "The visitors to such a sanctum would have to be of a class that valued books and that read really for the pleasure of reading, and not for the sake of spending a boresome half-hour. I would regard the place as the choicest part of the library — a sort of holy of holies, where individuals of kindred taste could meet on a sure high ground." Would that these plans might be carried out! Baltimore deserves better things at the hands of its appropriations committee; for whereas, in 1906, Chicago devoted \$300,000 to library uses, Boston \$325,550, and Pittsburgh \$200,000, Baltimore's appropriation has for twenty-two years not exceeded \$50,000.

A COCKPIT FOR LITERARY COMBATS has been playfully proposed by that fertile-brained, indefatigable, always suggestive writer on all things in heaven and earth, and a few besides, — Mr. Andrew Lang. He suggests that "if a capitalist of disinterested character could be enlisted," a special paper, "The Cockpit," might be established for the free discussion and final adjustment of differences between authors and critics. "I remember," he says (in the London "Morning Post") in some remarks leading up to this suggestion, "meeting Mr. Browning once, when he was in an indignant mood. A critic, a very eminent, courteous, and honorable critic, had reviewed his new poem, had printed extracts, and had complained that they were very obscure. No wonder, for the critic had inadvertently misprinted them so as to render them wholly unintelligible. I could not convince Mr. Browning, who did not know the reviewer, that the error, though deplorable, was accidental. Now, would Mr. Browning have been to blame if he had drawn the reviewer's attention to the correct text of his verses? Then the blunder would have been acknowledged, with apologies. This was a very unusual case, in belles-lettres. In historical and scientific matter I cannot but think that discussion is valuable to author, critic, and readers. If the critic is in the wrong, why should the author, in dignified sulks, leave him and his readers in the dark? It is all very well to talk about 'waiting the verdict of time and of science.' But their wheels move so slowly that they need to be accelerated, and they may be accelerated by discussion. There is, indeed, no other method. Suppose that the critic, however plausible his argument may seem, is in the wrong, and that the author can prove it. To remain in the wrong is the last thing that the critic desires. Yet perhaps nobody but the author can put him in the right, and, for want of discussion, he may carry his gray hairs to the grave under a misapprehen-

sion of Xavili Athanasianism, while the world may be equally deceived, sharing his illusion." Very sane and sensible. So long as all acrimony, all personal feeling, can be kept out of such discussions between authors and critics, they are to be encouraged, in the interests of truth and fairness. "Answering back," on the other hand, only leaves a bitter taste in the mouth; and though it sometimes seems to contribute to the gaiety of nations, the mirth aroused is Satanic.

THE ELOQUENT SHRUG OF OMAR KHAYYÁM may not be familiar to all readers. In his recent American visit Mr. William Archer was congratulated by a young actress on the never-failing fairness of his reviews—a fairness difficult for a dramatic critic, or any critic, to maintain. "To be fair," said Mr. Archer, "is sometimes hard and cruel, and sometimes it is rash. The unswervingly fair critic often takes up his pen with the shrug of Omar, the old Persian poet. You have heard of Omar's shrug? No? Well, it was eloquent. The Shah one day sent for the old poet. 'Omar,' said he, 'I have written some verses. Listen and I will read them to you.' And he read the verses, and in the ensuing silence looked at Omar anxiously. 'Well?' he said. 'Heaven-born,' replied Omar gently, 'each to his own calling. Sceptre in hand, you are most wise, just, and powerful; but pen in hand—' Omar shook his head. 'Heaven-born,' he continued, 'such verses would disgrace a nine-year-old schoolboy.' His eyes flashing with rage, the Shah shouted to his guards: 'To the stables with this old fool, and let him be soundly flogged.' Yet the Shah, for all that, respected Omar's judgment, and a week later he sent for the fearless and fair critic again. 'Another poem, Omar,' he said. 'A better one, I'm sure you'll think it is a better one,' he added wistfully. And he began to read the second poem to the old man. But in the middle of the reading Omar turned and started for the door. 'Where are you going?' demanded the Shah in amazement. Omar looked back and shrugged his shoulders. 'To the stables,' he answered, 'for another flogging.'" And did this would-be poet then comfort himself with repeating those scornful words of another merciless flogger of critics,— "as soon seek roses in December, ice in June, hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff, believe a woman or an epitaph, or any other thing that's false, before you trust in critics"? Probably the Shah was guilty of no such anachronism, Byron and the "English Bards" being still some seven hundred years in the future.

THE OLD-FASHIONED LIBRARIAN, who has been made the subject of some recent comment and correspondence in our pages, is again discussed by the editor of the library department of the Boston "Transcript." Instead of answering directly our correspondent's complaint of the decay of the literature-loving custodian of books, the Boston writer thinks it better, as he says, "to quote a few sentences from that storehouse of information concerning the manners and customs of the librarian of a past generation—that rare old work, 'The Old Librarian's Almanac.'" So delicious is the flavor of the passage that it must be here reprinted in full. "You shall chuse your Books with Care and Circumspection. When you have determin'd that it is Prudent to purchase a certain Work, do so cautiously and make a Shrewd Bargain with the Vendor. It will then be your Duty to Peruse the Volume, even if (as doubtless will be the Fact) you have scan'd it before Buying. Do not

let the Importunities of Persons who come to the Library hasten you in the Performance of this Task. They should be Content to wait for the Book until you have Satisfied yourself of its Contents. There will then remain the Necessity of recording its Acquisition in your Ledgers of Record. As for the Entry of its Style and Title in the Catalogue, many counsel that this is not needful, since you may be expected to remember that the Book has been Purchas'd for the Library. Some would advise that if it be a volume of Sermons it be placed on the Shelves with others of its like; or if it be a work of Natural Philosophy it stand near the volumes of that class. This is a waste of Labour. Assign it a Number which shall Correspond to its Position on the Shelf, and shall be the next in sequence from the latest Book which you have added, and so let them stand in the order in which they are Receiv'd. For, surely, if you desire to find a number of volumes of Sermons, it will be an easy matter for you, recalling when they were Purchas'd, to pluck them from their several resting-places. Keep your Books behind stout Gratings, and in no wise let any Person come at them to take them from the shelf except yourself." We have heard of a librarian who, to insure his tenure of office, refused to issue a catalogue of the collection in his charge. He must have been a faithful reader of "The Old Librarian's Almanac."

CHICAGO AS A CENTRE FOR LIBRARY EXTENSION has advantages that were recognized by the League of State Library Commissions at its mid-winter meeting in this city. On that occasion the following resolution was passed: "Inasmuch as a possible transfer of American Library Association headquarters has been under consideration by the council and executive board, and inasmuch as the greatest profit which can be derived through national headquarters is in furtherance of library extension, it is hereby declared the sense of those present at this League of Library Commissions that such headquarters ought to be located with special reference to the extension of library interests in those sections of the country where efforts promise the greatest possibilities. We therefore respectfully submit for the consideration of the executive committee the advisability of selecting Chicago as the location for American Library Association headquarters. The central location of Chicago affords greater convenience of access to a larger number of the members of the American Library Association than any other city under consideration, and the fact that it is the natural gathering point in the region which is likely to prove in the next decade the chief seat of library extension gives added force to the argument for its selection." Although the centre of population is now considerably to the eastward of Chicago, that centre is steadily moving westward, and thus Chicago is likely for a long time to come to prove an increasingly desirable situation for the proposed headquarters.

THE PRESS AND THE PEOPLE stand in a close and curious relation to each other. In a current magazine article on "The Newspaper as it is," by Gen. Charles H. Taylor of the Boston "Globe," he says: "Our papers are what the people make them. The public decides what it wishes to read; the editors and publishers, trained in their business, gather their raw material and work it into the finished product, news, to meet the demand." We protest that this is putting journalism on a level with manufactures. The law of supply and

demand cannot, of course, be ignored by a journal that has to be self-supporting; but no great editor has ever let his readers lead him by the nose. Did Greeley or Bryant or Dana let the people make their respective papers for them? No journalist is worthy of his calling who simply lays his ear to the ground and then writes what he hears the populace clamoring for. But General Taylor rises to higher levels in a succeeding paragraph, in which he well says: "Journalists have a much heavier responsibility than any other business men. The idle, the self-seeking, the untruthful, the vicious, beguile them at every hand, to use the powerful engine of the press to carry them a little way along their chosen road. The editor must watch ceaselessly for these unwelcome passengers and eject them on sight. He appreciates the responsibility of his trust. He reaches his ideal as nearly as he can, and does far more for the morals of the community than he is usually given credit for." Some conception of the influence of the press may be formed from the fact that there were last year published in this country alone 21,535 periodicals of all kinds, daily, weekly, monthly, etc.; and from recent statistics it is estimated by General Taylor that the total circulation of the newspapers of the country in 1907 was not less than ten billion copies. Another significant fact is that the world's issue of papers in the English language exceeds that of all others combined.

A GUIDE TO CURRENT FRENCH BOOKS, authoritative, and presumably "safe" for use in buying for family or public library purposes, seems to have been discovered by Mr. George F. Bowerman, librarian of the Washington Public Library, in the course of a recent study of the eighty-two free popular libraries scattered through the twenty wards (*arrondissements*) of Paris. His paper on "The Municipal Popular Libraries of Paris," read before the District of Columbia Library Association last October, published in "The Library Journal" of January, and now reprinted and issued as a separate leaflet, contains much interesting information on French public libraries. Its wealth of matter cannot be squeezed into a paragraph; therefore we will simply add a few more words about the book-list referred to above. Mr. Bowerman says: "One of the most interesting features of this library system [of Paris], and the one which will, perhaps, afford most practical help to American public libraries, is that which has to do with the choice of books. One of the most important functions of the central commission is the annual publication of a list of books accepted as suitable for these municipal libraries. It is from these lists that all accessions to the various libraries must be chosen." The list for 1907 contained 273 titles, besides periodicals, fiction covering 52 titles; "literature," 51; sciences, art, and education, 49; history, geography, and travel, 66; and other branches a lesser number. Advance requests for copies of these annual lists would probably receive courteous consideration. At present the number printed is limited. M. Rupert Pr  cy, Chief of the Central Service of Municipal Libraries, appears from Mr. Bowerman's paper to be the proper official to approach.

THE YELLOWNESS OF YELLOW JOURNALISM is learnedly discussed in a current magazine article by Professor W. I. Thomas of Chicago University. He argues, with a considerable use of the psychological laboratory terminology, that "the yellow feature of journalism" owes its existence to "the interest attaching to the disastrous.

If a yellow sheet be analyzed, it will be found that it handles events and persons from the pain or disaster standpoint. The event itself is of no significance. The loss of life, the loss of happiness, the loss of property, the loss of reputation, death and detraction, is the whole story. In a word, it is an appeal to the hate reflex." This elemental savage instinct, to which, as well as to other primitive and often unlovely instincts, man owes his survival, is probably at the bottom of that irrational and indefensible exultation that is not seldom felt in the misfortunes of others, even though those others be neighbors, friends, or even near relatives. La Rochefoucauld's pithy expression of this sad tendency of frail humanity is placed at the head of Professor Thomas's article. He defends his thesis rather convincingly, but fails, it must seem to many readers, to attach enough importance to that mere, idle, good-natured curiosity, that insatiable hunger for something new, that prompts many a kind-hearted and well-meaning person to buy the liveliest, most sensationall-headlined newspaper his penny will procure. Human nature cannot be so utterly corrupt that we go about thirsting for the blood and eager for the shame of our fellow-men with quite such avidity as Professor Thomas would have us believe.

OF INTEREST TO DICTIONARY-BUYERS and dictionary-sellers is a little leaflet, sent out by the G. & C. Merriam Company, publishers of Webster's dictionaries, wherein is given in full the late decision of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in the case of said company against George W. Ogilvie, also a publisher of dictionaries. Though imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, Mr. Ogilvie's emulous patterning of his own dictionary after the model furnished by the Messrs. Merriam, and especially his manifest admiration of these gentlemen's taste in the matter of title-page and covers and label, have proved a species of blandishment inoperative on that love of adulation which he evidently, and most naturally, had counted on as existent in the bosoms of the Merriam brothers. And, worst of all, the Court of Appeals has shown itself as little genial in this respect as the Merriams; for, to quote from the leaflet's summary of the decision, "it reverses the decision of the Circuit Court, rendered a year ago, orders an injunction against the further sale of Ogilvie's dictionary with the title-page and covers 'in the present form, or in any form calculated to deceive members of the public into purchasing his dictionary under the belief that it is a Merriam Webster's Dictionary,' and remands the case to the Circuit Court to pass upon the question of an accounting for the profits upon dictionaries which have been sold by Ogilvie up to this date."

STATESMANSHIP AND THE LOVE OF POETRY are often found happily conjoined. Instances of apt quotations from the poets, manifestly impromptu and in quick reply to an opponent, on the floor of the British Parliament, and, less often, in our own congressional halls, would fill a book, or at least a small one. Another proof of the affinity for classic poetry that is sometimes felt by the man engaged in public legislative, administrative, or judicial pursuits was furnished, in his old age, by the fourteenth Earl of Derby, who occupied the leisure of his later years in turning Homer's "Iliad" into blank verse. Almost half a century before, it is worth noting, he had gained the Chancellor's Latin verse prize at Oxford, his subject being "Syracuse." Ex-Secretary Long, in the days when he was better known as

Governor Long, beguiled the tedium of a summer vacation (or was it several summers, and some winters besides?) by making a metrical translation of the "Æneid." And now there has just appeared, from the pen of the Rt. Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith, Chief Justice of the Australian Commonwealth, a new English version, in the metre of the original, of Dante's never-to-be-enough-translated "Inferno." Almost as pleasing a spectacle as it would be to see philosophers ruling over the nations is it to behold poets and the translators of poets making the nations' laws.

THE OLDTIME SPELLING BEE is expected to buzz with renewed energy now that one Varnum Lincoln, late of Andover, Mass., has bequeathed to his native town the sum of five hundred dollars to found a perpetual spelling match. Once a year, according to the terms of the will, this contest in orthography shall be held in some public hall or place near the centre of the town, at or near the close of the winter term of the public schools. It must be conducted under the care and supervision of the school committee of the town, the public to be admitted free of charge. The contestants must be between the ages of ten and eighteen years, and the ancient method of "choosing sides" must be followed. Prizes of ten, six, and four dollars are to be given to the three best spellers. So far, so good; but why did not the testator provide against time-wasting disputes and much possible hard feeling by stipulating that his old-fashioned spelling bee should follow the old-fashioned spelling? A town divided against itself — one faction clinging to Webster, and the rest blown about by every wind of doctrine in the matter of spelling — would be a harrowing spectacle. Manifestly, Mr. Varnum Lincoln did not rise to the level of his opportunity.

ALUMINUM FOR BOOKS FOR THE BLIND is the latest application of that light and attractive metal. It is rolled into thin sheets and embossed, in the same way that paper is embossed, with the raised characters used for the blind. Aluminum books are now being printed in Edinburgh, and they are said to be easier to read than paper books; moreover, they do not soil with handling, and they are practically indestructible. The one drawback is the expense of manufacture. Before these books shall have been brought within the more general reach of the blind it is to be hoped that the blind, or their teachers, will unite on some one alphabet, out of the several now in use.

COMMUNICATIONS.

"THE OLD-FASHIONED LIBRARIAN" ONCE MORE.

(To the Editor of THE DIAL.)

In addition to the very courteous reply which Mr. Arthur L. Bailey made to my letter appearing in THE DIAL of February 1, there have been a number of other responses, through personal notes and in public print, some gratefully sympathetic, others ebullitions worthy of a greater problem. These latter, one and all, misread my letter and charge me, to use the words of the Boston "Transcript," with "bringing out the old-fashioned librarian to squeak and gibber for a season."

This I was very careful not to do, knowing the

sensitiveness of some librarians to the phrase, and also having repeatedly read the passage quoted again by the "Transcript," regarding the curmudgeon of olden time who kept his books under rusty lock and key.

My suggestion was a very simple one, growing out of an experienced need and from visits to a number of small libraries, in more than one of which untrained book-lovers were doing acceptable work. I don't for a moment doubt that these same people would do better work if they were graduated from some good library school; but, conditions being as they are — and no one has charged that I misstated them — the best graduates of the library schools very naturally accept positions where they have the minimum amount of merely mechanical work to do. In many cases, then, this leaves the mechanical graduate — who, of course, is not a product peculiar to library schools — for the remaining positions.

Many helps have already been furnished for the untrained, and my suggestion was that correct classification, the stumbling block for trained and untrained alike, should be furnished also from some competent source. Then the trustees of a small library would be enabled to employ a person fitted by tastes and culture for the position, whenever and wherever they could find him. It has seemed to some that such a person, aided by the technical helps available, would give better service than the poorer graduates of any school.

I am glad to state that a publishing house closely identified with library interests has already announced that it will soon be prepared to furnish such classification as I suggested.

THOMAS H. BRIGGS.

Charleston, Ill., March 7, 1908.

MORE DEFINITIONS OF "GAWMING" OR "GORMING."

(To the Editor of THE DIAL.)

I have read with interest the communication of Mr. Roswell Field in the issue of THE DIAL for March 1, with reference to the word "gawming." I, too, recall that in my boyhood the word was in frequent use in Connecticut. The verb was commonly spelled "gorm," and so far as I remember was used only in the sense of "to smear and render sticky." In the Century Dictionary both "gorm" and "gawm" are described as the same as "gaum," to which are given distinct meanings. The first definition includes "to care for; heed; observe; to understand; consider; distinguish"; another definition is "to smear as with anything sticky (perhaps a variation of gum)." Following this definition is the derivative meaning, "to handle clumsily; paw." The use of the word in all these senses is described as provincial English. The Standard Dictionary gives the like definitions with a similar attribution. It seems to me that the definition quoted from Colonel Higginson's article on "The Migration of Words," — "awkward, lubberly," comes from the derivative meaning of the word "gaum" — "to handle clumsily." It also seems to me that the meaning of the expression "gorming about," which Mr. Field gives as "looking about in a clownish and aimless manner," is a mistaken meaning; that expression being apparently derived from one of the definitions of the word "gaum," as first described, that is "to observe." The unusual occurrence of the word must account, I suppose, for the evident confusion of meanings in its use this side of the Atlantic. HOWARD MANSFIELD.

New York, March 5, 1908.

The New Books.

DR. JOHN BROWN AND HIS FRIENDS.*

A volume of familiar letters from the author of "Rab and his Friends" and "Marjorie Fleming" is sure to be pleasant reading. In a goodly octavo, his son (who, of course, continues the long line of John Browns) and Dr. D. W. Forrest have edited a generous selection of letters to and from Dr. Brown, covering the half-century from 1830 to the physician-author's death in 1882. In the near view thus afforded of a tender and beautiful, rather than a brilliant and powerful, character the book is all that could have been expected, and nearly all that could be desired. Like all collections of letters, however, it naturally includes many paragraphs, not to say pages, dealing with little transitory matters of no interest in themselves, but gaining a significance from the reader's love of the writer.

The father, grandfather, and great-grandfather of Dr. John Brown were all men of some mark, ministers of religion, at once saintly and shrewd — canny Scotchmen, in short, each a power in his parish, and even somewhat beyond — and all bore the name John, transmitted through how many previous generations we know not. Handicapped by such an apology for a name, "John Brown" (it might almost as well have been a number), these worthies were of necessity compelled to assert their individuality in some unmistakable manner, in order to avoid confusion with the hundreds of other contemporary John Browns. And in the case of our John Brown, who knows but it may have been a fear of losing the sense of his separate identity that made him, serious and devout though he was, break with the tradition of his forefathers and choose medicine rather than the ministry for a calling?

This inherited strain of seriousness and piety reveals itself early, and somewhat amusingly, in a letter to the writer's brother William. From John, surgeon's assistant at Chatham, twenty-one years old, goes the following fatherly advice to William under the paternal roof in Edinburgh:

"And now, my dear William, though I am 400 miles away from you, my thoughts are often with you, and they are sometimes anxious and sad, at others cheering and satisfying. My dear William, be assured that there is no real happiness where there is the indulgence in *guilt* — that pure thoughts and upright actions as assuredly and as consequently cause real happiness as the sun

* LETTERS OF DR. JOHN BROWN. With Letters from Ruskin, Thackeray, and Others. Edited by his Son and D. W. Forrest, D.D. With Biographical Introductions by Elizabeth T. M'Laren. Illustrated. New York: The Macmillan Co.

light and heat. Keep this always before you; KNOW the God of your fathers. Although I do not think I am really religious — I fear I am not — I can see from experience that the way of transgression is *hard*."

Much more advice, equally excellent, follows and precedes this illustrative extract. The young writer's reference to a personal experience of transgression is delightful, in its way. Not so pleasing, in fact almost shocking, is a curiously unfeeling account of a surgical operation a few months later. Anæsthetics were still in the future; yet no word of pity for the patient passes from John to William. "I took off a young man's arm," he writes, "on the morning the Dr. sailed. I found the operation ridiculously easy, and the whole of the stump, with the exception of the corner where the ligatures hung out, healed *primâ intentione*. Mr. Dods and I have used the actual Cautery three times, and I hope with success." But in surgery, as in war, cutting and burning get to be matters of little moment — the more's the pity. More human and homely in its interest is the subjoined passage from a letter to the paternal John Brown:

"I am very desirous to see Canterbury and Dover, and my present plan is to go down to Canterbury by one of the night coaches (6/ outside) so as to be there at 4 in the morning and in plenty of time to walk to Dover, distance 16 miles. After seeing it I shall walk to Ramsgate and Margate, and take the coach from there to Canterbury, where I will remain all night, and after spending the next day in seeing the Cathedral, etc., return *home* to Chatham in the evening, but on this also I await your decision. If I were to return by the smack directly without being more than a day in London, £5 would suffice, *inclusive* of the £2.2/ for the Tailor's bill. I think I mentioned in my last that if I remained in London and called on any of my friends, I would require a new pair of trowsers. They will cost £1.7/."

Of such unheroic details are great and small alike compelled to take thought in this world of food and clothing and tailors' bills. By way of contrast, let us quote a few sentences addressed to the writer's lifelong friend, Dr. John Taylor Brown. Worthy of note is the mention of the three-year-old "bairn," from the hand that was afterward to write so touchingly of "Marjorie."

"I often envy your very miseries, the things that drive you inwards into the *Far in*, where, self-sufficient and self-contained, you may amid darkness — where the *light* is as darkness — sit 't the centre and enjoy bright day. I am going out to Callands to-day for no other purpose of being all alone in the open air on the common road for 5 hours, and have a long and full-length *think* with myself. The other purpose is to see a *bairn* of 3 years old, the daughter of my Uncle's ploughman's wife, a perfect image of sweet *wildness*. I wish you saw her with her long eyelashes and her unfathomable eyes, and her *erie* black blink. If you did you would understand some of my love for her. I have wandered days with her among the hills, leading

her in my hand, and every now and then asking her to open wide her eyes that I might stare into their depth. She will kiss nobody in the world but her father, mother, brothers and sisters, and me!"

Before passing to the later and, in a literary way, more important letters, it must be noted that even in his early professional experience at Chatham Dr. John Brown attained some degree of fame. His unselfish spending of himself at the time of the cholera epidemic, in 1832, was many years later referred to by Dickens at a private dinner-party in Edinburgh. The novelist, as a footnote records the incident, "told of the deep impression made on his mind by the conduct of a young Scottish doctor at Chatham during the cholera epidemic. He described his remaining with a poor woman whom all had deserted, ministering to her to the end, and then, overcome with fatigue, falling asleep, and being still asleep when in the morning the house was entered. One of the party exclaimed, 'That is Dr. John Brown!'"

In a letter to Lady Minto, written in 1880, are references to two renowned characters, one of whom was not then of so great renown as to make the recognition of his greatness a mere matter of course.

"I don't wonder you like the *Travels with a Donkey*; it is just what you say of it, true genius, a new liquor, fresh and aromatic. . . . He is son of Thomas Stevenson, Civil Engineer, 'the Family Theologian,' and grandson of the grand old Bell Rock man. He wrote in the *Cornhill* some time ago the wisest and best words, since Carlyle, on Burns, on whom of late far too much has been written; and he has a clever little book, *An Inland Voyage in France in a Canoe*, which he made with Sir James Simpson's son Walter; and he has a paper on the old Capital of California in this month's *Fraser*, full of charm in feeling and description. . . . I met Lowell when here [in Edinburgh] and like him greatly — a 'full man,' as well knowledgeable as Sir Henry Taylor, but full also of original fun — a great poet, I think. Do you know him and his works well? I would much rather be him than Tennyson or Browning; there is more of the light of common day, more naturalness in thought and word, and no want of depth or tenderness, with humour of the strongest and rarest flavour. He told me he crossed the Atlantic with Thackeray, Clough, and Lowe — such a foursome! He talked a great deal about *Don Quixote*, which I had just been slowly reading, and I was delighted to hear his praises. But he says it is dreadful to read him in English. He looks upon Cervantes as on the same shelf with Homer, Shakespeare, and Dante, primary and unapproachable."

These letters form, and are meant by the editors to form, an outline sketch of the writer's life from his own pen. To supplement them there are added others addressed to him, out of the comparatively few still preserved. Most interesting are messages from Ruskin, Thackeray, Gladstone, Jowett, Dean Stanley, R. H. Hutton,

and Mark Twain. The last-named appears to have been on the friendliest of terms with the chronicler of Rab's little history, as was only natural. From Elmira he writes in the summer of 1876:

"DEAR FRIEND THE DOCTOR — It was a perfect delight to see the well-known handwriting again! But we so grieve to know that you are feeling miserable. It must not last; it *cannot* last. The regal summer has come, and it will smile you into high good cheer; it will charm away your pains, it will banish your distresses. I wish you were here, to spend the summer with us. We are perched on a hill-top that overlooks a little world of green valleys, shining rivers, sumptuous forests, and billowy uplands veiled in the haze of distance. We have no neighbors. It is the quietest of all quiet places, and we are hermits that eschew caves and live in the sun. Doctor, if you'd only come! I will carry your letter to Mrs. C. now, and there will be a glad woman, I tell you! . . . Come over, Doctor John, and bring the Barclays, the Nicolsons, and the Browns, one and all! — Affectionately yours,

"SAML. L. CLEMENS."

Readers of the "Horse Subsecivæ" will remember the chapter, in the third series, on the "Death of Thackeray"; and to them it will be no surprise to find in this volume of the author's correspondence evidence of the warmest friendship between the two men. The Edinburgh physician was among the first to recognize the novelist's genius, and he took the lead in purchasing and sending to him, as a tribute from Edinburgh admirers, a handsome silver inkstand fashioned to represent "Mr. Punch." This neatly appropriate testimonial opened the way to a correspondence that lasted until Thackeray's death. The closing paragraph of a letter written by Thackeray in the course of his American lecture tour is not without interest. The place and date are "Charleston, S. C., March 25, 1853."

"It's all exaggeration about this country — barbarism, eccentricities, nigger cruelties, and all. They are not so highly educated as individuals, but a circle of people knows more than an equal number of English (of Scotch I don't say; there, in Edinburgh, you are educated). The negroes are happy, whatever is said of them, at least all we see, and the country Planters beg and implore any Englishman to go to their estates and see for themselves. I think these 4 sides of paper might contain all I have got to say regarding the country, which I can't see for the dinners, etc. To-morrow I go to Richmond on my way to New York and thence into Canada; and in July or before, I hope to see that old country again which is after all the only country for us to live in. . . ."

Miss Elizabeth T. M'Laren, one of Dr. Brown's friends and correspondents, has supplied the necessary biographical notes relating to persons named in the book, and portraits and other illustrations are interspersed at brief intervals.

PERCY F. BICKNELL.

THE GREAT MASTER OF MILITARY STRATEGY.*

In the first two volumes of Colonel Dodge's Napoleon (reviewed in *THE DIAL* of September 1, 1904), the campaigns from 1796 to 1807 were described; the third and fourth volumes are now before us, and carry us through to the closing scenes of the great drama. The years from 1808 to 1815 are the years of Napoleon's decline; the dictator of European policies from the raft at Tilsit was now to find himself more slackly followed, then stubbornly opposed, then persistently forced back, then crushed. Colonel Dodge follows every move of the Grand Army with keen but unbiased judgment; he lays his finger on every faulty manœuvre; he finds in the waning vitality of the Emperor ample cause for the lapses in judgment and energy which a Bonaparte would never have shown; and when all is said and done he finds in Napoleon the greatest military genius of modern times.

The general reader, who may be presumed to be acquainted with the outlines of the Napoleonic wars, will open these massive volumes with some shrinking of spirit; but if he will summon his patience and resolution, a sure reward will come in the deep compelling interest of the events themselves and in what is possibly his first clear comprehension of the movements so clearly and minutely depicted. The true way to feel the dramatic force of a battle or a campaign is to understand it; and this achievement is within the reach of those who will read with care these volumes. Colonel Dodge of course uses the technical terms of war; but these are readily learned by the lay reader, and the author gives him every help with maps and plans. In this way, what was formerly vague geographical suggestion becomes accurate topography, and the fury and glory and terror of it all are only intensified by the statistics and the precision.

Volume III. begins with the indecisive Spanish campaigns of 1808, in which Napoleon's brother Joseph and some of his generals showed what blunders they were capable of when away from the master's eye. Then come the series of battles along the Danube, in which Wagram remains the most conspicuous. Over 300 pages are given to the invasion of Russia in 1812; and no rhetoric is employed or needed to heighten the difficulties of the march to Moscow, or the horrors of that awful retreat. The facts and

figures, as Colonel Dodge marshals them with passionless veracity, are enough. Moscow and the Beresina were the fourth act of the great tragedy; Leipzig and Waterloo were the fifth. The account of these epoch-closing struggles occupies a large part of the concluding volume, and in it the author has put forth to the utmost his powers of profound investigation and lucid description. In regard to Waterloo, indeed, he would seem to have said the last word.

"From its actual course it seems certain that, had the battle of Waterloo been fought out between Napoleon and Wellington, quite apart from expectation of aid or dread of interference by the Prussians, and judging by the many acknowledged weak spots in the British line of battle, it would, with the heavier masses and reserves properly put in by the master hand, have proved a French victory. . . . Napoleon's gravest mistakes were in not manœuvring when Blücher was first seen, and later in not retiring out of action, and in putting in what remained of the Guard as he did, instead of using it to protect a retreat to the Sambre. The fatal outcome was primarily attributable to Napoleon's want of his old perspicacity. We can scarcely conceive him, in the days of Austerlitz or Jena, drawing from the facts he knew an absolute conclusion that the Prussians could not reach his right; but at Waterloo he did draw this wrong conclusion, acted upon it, and failed. Had he correctly divined Blücher's intentions he would, by 1 or 2 a. m. have ordered in Grouchy, and he would not so long have put off his massed attack upon the English. The best work of the day was done by Lobau at Planchenoit, under the Emperor's eye. The Prussians had been as good as their word, and deserve unstinted commendation; and as to Wellington, no praise is too high for his courage in accepting battle where he did, and for his tactical alertness, his skill in handling his men, and his dogged perseverance throughout the day. As always, the British troops fought as they should, and the officers exhibited every quality that goes to make up the best lieutenants."

Along with this judgment must be read the author's conclusion a few pages further on:

"All criticism of Napoleon's conduct of this campaign must be read in the spirit that prompts it, the utmost admiration of his genius, and a desire to inquire why he here failed, when previously, under as difficult conditions, he had won. After all is said, and despite his last four years, Napoleon remains the greatest soldier of modern times; criticism of any kind must always result in evolving this conclusion; and every word spoken of his laxness here is subject to the knowledge that no failure can rob him of his fame as the best leader and broadest teacher of war of the Christian era."

This last phrase seems to exclude Alexander, Hannibal, and Cæsar, the three ancient ones of Colonel Dodge's six great captains; and in this connection it is at least interesting to note his summary of his six heroes:

"No doubt, taking him in his many-sidedness, Cæsar is the greatest character in history. It may not unfairly be claimed that Napoleon follows next, especially in that he preserved for Europe many germs of the liberty

* NAPOLEON. A History of the Art of War, from the Beginning of the Peninsular War to the Battle of Waterloo. By Theodore Ayrault Dodge. In four volumes. Volumes III. and IV. Illustrated. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

which was born of the blood of the Revolution. Caesar was the most useful man of antiquity; Napoleon comes near to being the most useful man of modern times. But neither Caesar nor Napoleon appeals to us as do splendid, open-hearted Alexander, patient, intrepid, ever-constant Hannibal, the Christian hero Gustavus, and daring, obstinate, royal Frederick. Were we to classify these great captains, we might describe them thus: Alexander, the first teacher of systematic war; Hannibal, father of strategy; Caesar, the organizer; Gustavus Adolphus, father of modern war; Frederick, the battle tactician; Napoleon, the perfect strategist."

So long as the war-drum must throb, it is well that such books should be written; and it is matter for honest pride that from the small Army list of the United States should come a man who could compose a series of perhaps the most exhaustive military biographies of our time.

JOSIAH RENICK SMITH.

THE REJUVENATION OF HENRY JAMES.*

Some people will feel when they see the "New York Edition" of Mr. Henry James's novels and tales, as some others felt when the "Outward Bound Edition" of Kipling appeared. That was (as this is) a very handsome edition, and something wholly proper and what one likes. There was a pleasure in viewing, in thinking of, the stately volumes, even aside from the pleasure of reading such good print on such good paper. Yet there was then, as there will be now, a touch of regret that those old familiar favorites are to be superseded, relegated to an upper shelf or a row behind those with the new uniforms, put away. They were of different sizes and ages, and from different publishers, those old volumes of James, and probably the set was not complete—even an earnest Jamesian (shall we say?) could acknowledge some gaps; still the old volumes had charm, partly perhaps of association.

But these are common woes,—woes that one may happen to feel whenever a favorite contemporary is elevated to the Olympus of a definitive edition. There is another thing in this case, a loss which doubtless Mr. James feels, to parody Shelley, but we alone deplore. In this case we are not to have the dear old things as we remember them, or even as they were. They are to return to us brought up to date by the author. If you have ever seen one you loved twenty-five years ago you have perhaps regretted the changes made in the once familiar lines by five lustres.

*THE NOVELS AND TALES OF HENRY JAMES. New York Edition. Vol. I. Roderick Hudson; Vol. II. The American; Vols. III. and VI. The Portrait of a Lady; Vols. V. and VI. The Princess Casanovissa. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Here it is just the other way: we are now called to regret that once loved forms are rejuvenated. The friend of our youth has decided upon a golden wig. Mr. James is translating his works into his own dialect. At first it was hoped by those of older time that there would be but slight change,—that Mr. James would run through a volume as he sat over a cigar after dinner, and pencil on the margin a change or so. But such is not the case: there is hardly a page where he has not made half a dozen alterations.

Such a proceeding overshadows every other interest connected with the edition: one cannot help it. Undoubtedly, at best or at worst, the revision is a minor matter. If we like it, it does not really change our net impression of the work; if we do not like it, ten to one we shall hardly notice the difference unless we set ourselves down to collate. We must constantly say to ourselves, "It is *not* important,"—but we cannot help thinking of it and talking of it. Because, of course, the recent James is so different from the Henry James, Jr., of our youth. "So different, yes, and so much better!" cry the neo-Jamesians, the recent converts. "Would you have stopped Tennyson's revision and re-revision?"

"No," say the Irreconcilables, those who read "The Portrait of a Lady" with the fevers and pulses of youth, and strove unto death with somnolence over "The Wings of a Dove." "No, [say they] we would prevent no one else from doing as he may choose. We would stop one thing only, just this one, this unique person from doing this one unique thing." The thing is done, however, and done thoroughly; and if the irreconcilable will not like it, the only thing to do is to shut oneself up with the older editions and forget the modern world, or else to confine oneself to "The Spoils of Poynton" and such other things as Mr. James leaves outside the fold.

The fact that the present edition gives us a revised text is really of something more than the sentimental interest alluded to. As he went on in life Mr. James changed his ideas of material and his ideas of expression. His interests in life seemed to turn, not unnaturally, into directions neglected before, and which many of his admirers would have themselves been contented still to neglect. His feeling for expression became more precise, more refined, perhaps even more delicate. He became in some respects more modern,—or more accurately he remained modern. But chiefly he strove to get closer to the texture, the movement, of his own thought, and to give his readers a more delicate sense of his conception than had been possible before.

It was a fine ideal. "Rien que la nuance!" says Paul Verlaine, "toute le reste est littérature." Mere literature Mr. James's volumes would never have become, and yet we cannot think him wrong for pursuing assiduously the fleeting good that mocked him with the view. Others have done the same thing, notably Walter Pater: toward the end of his life those who had read "The Renaissance" with passion were at some pains to comprehend, even, "Plato and Platonism." Mr. James also became crabbed when, perhaps, he meant to be clear, or at least exact.

Thus it really is something of a question whether it was worth while to re-write his novels. There can be little doubt that Mr. James wrote better English thirty years ago than he writes to-day. But he does not think so himself, and so he has done his best to put the old dears into modern dress.

It is impossible without much study to say how he has succeeded. He has not succeeded entirely, it may be said. "Roderick Hudson" and the others are fortunately not quite "brought into alignment of style, color, and general literary presentment" with "The Golden Bowl." Still they are changed. The changes are all (so far as my collations extend) in matters of word, phrase, and sentence; chapters and paragraphs are as before. Such changes hardly affect larger matters: they change the general tone and they may change the impression of character. Thus Christopher Newman seems an American gentleman who in the 70's had had the advantage of reading Mr. James's later writings. Asked if this is the first time he has been abroad, he used to say, "Very much so"; now he says "Quite immensely the first." Asked if he will not learn to talk French, he used to say only, "Hang me if I should ever have thought of it"; now he adds, "I seemed to feel it too far off." When Mlle. Nioche tells him that her copy is bad he used to say, "I like it all the same"; now he says, "I never outgrew a mistake but in my own time and in my own way." He once said "I'm not intellectual"; now he says "I don't come up to my own standard of culture."

But I must leave this subject, fascinating though it is, because of its immensity. To tell what changes Mr. James has made, even what sort of changes, if one tell at all accurately (and why at all otherwise?) would be a great task. And to tell why he made them would be, if not a task at least or at most an achievement for a far finer divination than is here at the reader's service. One must be satisfied with recom-

mending it to the university students of literature as material for doctors' dissertations.

Let us leave such things, and turn to what is for the moment (if not for posterity) of more importance. The prefaces will be a delight to all Jamesians, even to many who modestly disclaim such a title. To such a one these prefaces may be interesting chiefly as helping on toward one's conception of the novel as a literary form, — to put it in very academic language. Not quite so interesting, I should say, as "a unique body of criticism of the art of the novelist" (to quote the prospectus), but rather a collection of facts which will help the student as a foundation for a science of fiction. Or to be more practical, they will serve the reader of James — the new, fresh, unsophisticated reader of James, if there are any such, there surely will be, — to see what the author is driving at, to see what in the novels was the author's conception of the fine thing. Not that the author always knows, — we are inclined to say, perhaps not, but then we may imagine that he has a keener, intenser feeling about it than we shall be likely to have. The author may be often wrong — Dickens, we may remember, fancied himself so much on his plots and his pathos; but then, so are we sometimes wrong. And often it is a good tonic to get an idea of something that we had not particularly noticed.

So, then, these prefaces are interesting as showing us the novelist as he conceives his work. In "Roderick Hudson" he speaks of the necessity of a full living development of his subject; in "The American" of the conception first of the situation, and the subsequent entrance therein of the hero. In "The Portrait of a Lady" it was the figure of Isabel Archer who appeared first and gathered around her those who should enable her to do what she had to do. In "The Princess Casamassima," the first impression was the life of a great city calling for appreciation and the creation of an intelligence that should, after its fashion, appreciate it. Those are very interesting things, — not unknown to students before, but still rather astonishing to the cut-and-dried student (if anything can astonish him), the appearance of these three recognized modes of conception, if not of construction, in the work of the same artist in three consecutive works. Other things, too, — the definition (if we may use so definite a word about anything that Mr. James has written) of romanticism by this accomplished realist, the necessity of a chorus by this hardly classical modernist, these things will be noted and filed away by the

student, read and rolled under the tongue as a precious morsel by the Jamesian, grasped (we may at least hope) and put to the due use of cultivating the taste by the conscientious among general readers.

Yet in addition to all these details there is one thing striking in these prefaces: namely, Mr. James's sense of life. That certainly Mr. James has, — of his own kind, a skeptic may say. Mr. James's world may seem to many a sequestered, perverted, exasperating world, and yet to him it evidently lives. He is not filling a regular literary form when he writes, or merely doing what the public will like. He has a sense of life, and he renders it. There is nothing mechanical in his composition, construction, architecture. The heroine of "The Portrait of a Lady" must have a world to live in, and somehow the people that are to make up that world gather about her, in a single night, so that the novelist wakes one morning and finds them all there. The hero of "The Princess Casamassima" must contrast socialism with society, and there is Christina Light, not settled and laid on the shelf, but living and insistent. There the creative imagination gets away from us. There in the feeling for vitality we have a man of genius, as well as an accomplished artist.

Well, one cannot say everything. Certainly one really ought to take this chance to say something ultimate about one of the preëminent figures of English literature; but there has been so much else, that that slight matter must fall aside. Let us be content for the time with the information of the prospectus, that "In the works of no other writer have American types of character and ideas appeared in such high relief and been characterized with such definite reference to nationality." It surely is not worth saying anything after that.

One thing may be remarked in closing. It was a very happy idea to illustrate each volume with "portraits of some scene, situation, etc., representative of the locality of the text," and the execution has admirably carried out the plan: the pictures are an immense addition to the novels. Such as are accustomed to impressions of the spirit of place will look long and with intense pleasure at the picture of the Faubourg Saint Germain in "The American," — it almost takes the place of the novel. People who feel that they have lost something in the modernistic text may feel that they have gained something here, and so almost with some of the others. The spirit of place, — how much it may be in a novel! People skip long descriptions of scenery,

doubtless, but there is a sense of place that is surely as fine, as satisfying, in a novel as a good situation or a good character. One had not, perhaps, thought of it before in Mr. James's work, nor is it always there. But in some cases it is surely felt, as surely he felt it strongly himself. Not in Northampton, Mass., or other such crudities; Mr. James, as he explains himself, has little sense of that sort of thing, — but of great centres, of Rome, of London, of Paris, "the splendid, the glorious," the sophisticated, the *decadent*, as they used to say themselves.

EDWARD E. HALE, JR.

SURVEYS OF AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY.*

The publication of two histories of American Philosophy, one in French and one in English, is not merely interesting in itself but also as indicating an advancement in our intellectual life. We have reached a point in which our speculations on the obscure questions of being take hold on each other, and take hold on the kindred speculations of other nations and other times, in a fashion that makes them matters of general import. It comes to be understood that, no matter how much contempt may be expressed for metaphysics as contrasted with inquiries which relate more directly to our immediate welfare, any people whose thoughts are at all active will always be interested in this form of speculation. A nation is very restricted in its mental effort that does not occasionally push its conjectures into the unseen world. Once coming under this fascination of mind, it will never rest in contentment till it has built up about known facts a system of coherent assumptions which serve to expound and support them. If we deal diligently with the visible, it is sure to lead us to the invisible as in some way coherent with it.

The first mentioned of these two histories, M. Beclaere's "La Philosophie en Amérique," is a clear, succinct, timely treatment of the growth in American thought of philosophy as a solvent of the riddle of being, and helps us to understand how certainly these speculations have arisen, covered the ground, and are guiding us to a more harmonious sense of the nature of the life we are leading. Coming from a writer of another nationality, this history is grateful

* LA PHILOSOPHIE EN AMÉRIQUE. By L. van Beclaere, O.P. New York: Eclectic Publishing Co.

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY. By I. Woodbridge Riley, Ph.D. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.

our American pride. It gives attention to the educational and social influence of the various authors, as well as to the philosophical notions they have advocated.

The other history referred to, that prepared by Dr. I. Woodbridge Riley, is a much fuller presentation, the result of extended inquiry, and seems to give us at once footing among the thoughtful nations of the world. As a history, it opens the way to much further labor, and leaves in this opening volume the impression of a large and not unfruitful field. A history of philosophy may lay stress on either part of its title; it may be primarily historical or primarily philosophical, itself entering the field of inquiry and bringing criticism to its several products. Dr. Riley's work unites the two tendencies, keeping neither exclusively in the foreground. What a history of philosophy in America chiefly calls for is a tracing of the steps by which this form of thought has progressed, and so preparing us to take a more intelligent and interested part in questions still arising.

A criticism we are inclined to make on Dr. Riley's first volume is its partial lack of a clear and succinct statement of the stages of discussion and of the persons taking part in them. It is not easy to give a brief effective presentation of any system of philosophy or of its advocates; especially as the belief is often inadequate, and its disciples are confused and inconsistent in their allegiance. Something must be sacrificed to prominent features; leading considerations must be strongly emphasized and qualifications passed more rapidly. The writer must photograph strongly ruling features, even if he fails to define perfectly intervening surfaces. Dr. Riley seems to us to wander a little too much at random through an author's works, and, by mingling his own criticism, to help us still further to lose our way and to be left with a colorless impression of the force and order of events. Strong strokes should be given, even if the details of the picture seem somewhat neglected.

So many mistakes are possible in philosophy, the darkness shuts in so quickly at so many points, we institute so many inquiries to which no answer can be given, our explanations are so often transient and insufficient, we so readily exaggerate the fragment of truth we have secured, that it behooves us always to have a temper very tolerant of error, and to allow the little gold gained to be quietly added to our treasure. The faults of reason, finding its obscure way in a world whose clouds roll back upon us almost as

soon as they are lifted, should be corrected with that patience which grows out of long continued and only partially successful effort. This precept of quiet consideration, Mr. Riley usually observes; but his words occasionally show aversion or contempt. When Clark, a small farmer, following in the steps of Edwards, ventures the conclusion, "The question of foreordination to salvation or damnation, like raising a crop of wheat, is a question of using ordinary means," he is squelched by the remark, "Here is Puritanism in bucolic trimmings; Edwards, bound in half-calf." It may be doubted whether Clark, short-sighted as he was, groped more painfully amid the facts of the world than did Edwards.

Dr. Riley seems to us too anxious to trace historical connections, as those of Edwards with some previous author. Forms of thought are not as strictly genetic as forms of life. Given general circumstances and current speculations, and any one person drops into them or opposes them under his own predilections. Personal tendencies are potent in the realm of mind. It is a waste of ingenuity to strive to trace them closely from person to person. Edwards's discussions grew out of his religious beliefs. Granted his sense of a mystical union with God, granted the omnipotence of God, and Edwards's view of liberty follows naturally from his ruling convictions. What was peculiar to Edwards was his unusual analytic power. By means of this, he heaped up about any topic a formidable argument. Assume the universal presence of causation, and nothing but logical coherence is called for to disprove the freedom of the human mind.

Dr. Riley's history is the more welcome because it comes to us with a far wider survey of the field than any which has gone before. We are no longer choked up by philosophy which has come to us as a by-product of science; we cease to look upon philosophy as at best but the aftermath of a field whose chief harvest has been gathered in, and we are allowed once more to indulge ourselves in a wide survey of physical and spiritual facts and the one universe they together make up. We cannot readily attach too much value to science, but we can easily, and often do, under-estimate the considerations which give chief interest to life, freighted as it is with the wealth of physical knowledge. No matter how skilfully we may fathom the sea, we must still draw our own breath from the heavens above us.

JOHN BASCOM.

THE ANCIENT APPARITION OF
THE MONGOLS.*

A study of the Mongol race is of immense importance, not only for a proper understanding of European history and for the destruction of much worthless tradition and mythology based on our ethnic conceits, but also for right ideas in this twentieth century when the ends of the earth have met. Not only are the Mongols "at our doors," but pretty nearly everybody is called a Mongol, or Mongolian, whose eye or whose tint of skin, as seen through the haze of our ignorance, is supposed to be of the race of Genghis Khan.

Mr. Jeremiah Curtin's history of the Mongols is therefore valuable to the ordinary reader, and with its index and map will be a useful addition to the library. We may even hope that among the eighty or ninety millions of a people which has treaties with both China and Japan, but hardly a Japanese or Korean professorship in the whole nation, there will be many readers. Having read it, we can admire the patience and learning and the literary skill of the author; for he has covered a vast deal of territory, and many of his passages are brilliant and show us the chief men of the great migrations and temporary kingdoms in such a way as to make them seem real personalities. Yet it must be said that the book is not so much a history as it is an unsifted collection of traditions and folk-lore. Mr. Curtin may have possessed all the scholarship ascribed to him in such generous measure by President Roosevelt, in the preface to the volume; but we wish he had given his authorities, original and secondary, — or, if not these, at least a chapter on the sources of his history. He might have revealed to us the labors of the mighty men of research who had gone before him over the ground both of the literature and the topography of the subject. Of Howorth the compiler, or of Von Hammer the investigator, we hear nothing; nor are there any notes or references to either chroniclers, critics, scholars, or narrators, Asiatic or European, who have told the Mongol story.

It is an awful picture of murder and devastation which Mr. Curtin has given us. No doubt the Mongols were vile and filthy, even butchers and devils of a certain sort. Yet when it comes to believing in the Mongol as a sort of diabolical superman, as the ugliest human being

on earth, and murderous beyond all comparison, we must decline to take our opinions from the mediæval chroniclers or the tellers of folk-tales whom Mr. Curtin seems to have so fully trusted. Such things cannot take the place of the fruits of critical scholarship. Of course the popular fancy may be hit by descriptions of these "squat, slit-eyed, brawny horsemen, with faces like the snouts of dogs," and the popular Oriental idea of the Mongol will continue to be that he emerged from Tartarus, and that we white men and "heirs of all the ages" have nothing to learn from the descendants of these men who are supposed to live in China and Japan, and still have an ambition to cover the whole earth. Nevertheless, we cannot see how the Mongols differed very much from the Assyrians or the Romans, who destroyed nations, ploughed over sites of cities, and in other ways helped to give humanity its blood-baths.

It is high time for some scholar to sift the records and evidence and give the sane and critical story of the Mongol invasion, treating of the Mongol origin, and settling once for all the dispute whether Genghis Khan was or was not Yoshitsune the Japanese. Did the Mongols bring, from China into Europe, printing by means of movable types, and other things that were worth having? To a large extent, the Mongols constituted the influences that, by resistance and absorption, became the making of Russia, even as in modern days the menace of Russia became so largely the incentive for the making of the new Japan. Furthermore, while the mediævalists had the impression of snout-faced and squatty enemies, whom they in their superstitious fears correlated with the devil himself and with the fiends of hell, we must not forget that the Mongols may have had a no less favorable opinion of the Europeans. If some of us could, or would, read in Chinese books, and other "Mongolian" literary productions, what the Asiatics think of us, our personal odor, the set of our eyes, the protrusion of our noses, the general offensiveness of our ways, and the manner in which reputed Christian soldiers and sailors have bombarded and massacred their people, we might attain a different view-point both of ourselves and of our enemies. By all means, let Mr. Curtin's book be read; it is interesting and fairly attractive in form. In its composition, Mr. Curtin has followed the bent of his genius; but it cannot accurately be called a history.

WILLIAM ELLIOT GRIFFIS.

*THE MONGOLS: A HISTORY. By Jeremiah Curtin. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co.

BRIEFS ON NEW BOOKS.

*The art of
landscape
gardening.*

It was inevitable that sooner or later such standard works on landscape gardening as those of Humphry Repton (1752-1818) should be given in modern form to a public that comprises laymen as well as professionals. Under the auspices of the American Society of Landscape Architects, and edited by one of its members, Mr. John Nolen, the Riverside Press has now put forth a volume containing the two most important works of this notable pioneer in his field, under the title "The Art of Landscape Gardening" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.). These two works, "Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening" and "Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening," have been so edited as to make them of practical usefulness to modern readers and students of the subject, without obliterating Repton's frequent quaintness of expression, of which the following sentence, opening Chapter II. of the first-named work, may be given as an example: "The perfection of landscape gardening depends on a concealment of those operations of art by which nature is embellished; but where buildings are introduced, art declares herself openly, and should, therefore, be very careful, lest she have cause to blush at her interference." Repton's high rank in his art is undeniable; that he was appreciated in his own time is shown by the fact that over two hundred places, large and small, in various parts of England, remain as examples of his "good taste," the quality that he exalts most highly. It is doubtless true, as Mr. Nolen points out, that a part of this contemporary appreciation arose from the fortunate fact that Repton "came at a time of significant development in his profession," which in turn was a part of the "romantic" movement. Yet a man of such native genius, with a real love of nature, the eye of an artist, a deep respect for utility, and a realization that a knowledge of many related arts and sciences was necessary for a true practice of his own profession, must have impressed himself on his times sooner or later. Mr. Nolen conceives that, significant as was Repton's professional work, his writings are "his most permanent contribution to his art." They are founded upon his own observations and practice, as recorded first in the "Red Books" devoted to each place that he laid out or improved. In his more formal writings he gave numerous extracts from these note-books, and altogether put in permanent form the principles of his art, which he derived by taking the best, as he says, from his predecessors, Le Nôtre and Brown, and infusing these with his own genius. The scope of the two works under consideration is wide: "Sketches and Hints" (1795) treats of situations, buildings, water, large private places, formal gardening, approaches, the affinity between painting and gardening, and the sources of pleasure in landscape gardening; "Theory and Practice" (1803) includes these subjects treated more in detail and more sci-

entifically, and has chapters also on ancient and modern gardening, the relation between architecture and gardening, the formation of a new place, and considerations on color in landscape. Repton's notes, together with some by the editor, are grouped at the back of the volume. The illustrations, including twenty-two full-page plates besides a frontispiece in color and numerous diagrams in the text, are especially worthy of mention, because, with the exception of a few modern photographs, they are reproductions of Repton's own sketches, most of them in two sections, one superimposed on the other, — the upper one showing a place in its original state, the other with improvements proposed or executed. The appearance of the book is in keeping with its character and with the assurance of excellence afforded by its imprint.

*A pernicious
instance of
"near-science."*

A travesty upon truth is ever more dangerous than gross error. The latter deceives only the culpably ignorant; the former misleads the deserving though not discerning layman. In no field is such deviation more subtle and more pernicious than in that by right pertaining to the psychologist; and if the distinction must be awarded for the most flagrant violation of the scientific decalogue, the works of Dr. John Duncan Quackenbos should be considered for the honor. The latest issue from this source, "Hypnotic Therapeutics in Theory and Practice" (Harper), is no worse than its predecessors, and brings hardly a novel aspect of what was sufficiently exploited in a former work. There is the same mingling of established doctrine with fancifully supported and crudely interpreted personal dogma; the same exaggeration of what in modest proportion would be true enough; the same appeal to the lovers of the occult and the intellectually asthenic. Mental therapeutics is a topic that looms large in the public interest. Results are obtained by methods crude and drastic, "bromidic" or "sulphitic," rational and the reverse, — the success being determined by the low or high personal equation of the patient. In the field where the wise do not altogether fear to tread, yet tread with caution, the bolder unwisdom rushes in and reaps (not wholly undeservedly) the reward of valor; whereupon old theories are distorted and new ones crudely woven to give to practice the background of consistent design. Whether the whole shall bear an intelligible and significant pattern, or be put together with the coherence of a crazy-quilt, depends wholly upon the mental quality of the performer. For the product that takes something of the warp and woof of science and imitates accepted designs, but makes of the whole a plausible counterfeit, the term "near-science" is not wholly *malapropos*. Hypnotism is real enough; so is mental therapy; and so are the types of ailment and of relief treated in the several chapters of this book. But when accepted relations are stated (though these also misleadingly) on one page and wholly unwarranted deductions on the next — both with

equal conviction—the reader selects the more sensational and builds up a system of heaven and earth that is truly never dreamt of by a sound philosophy. This is really “yellow” psychology, and is none the less jaundiced because one may charitably concede that the author is sincere. The pity of it is that more conservative and rational presentations of the psychological domain fall upon unwilling and impatient listeners, while these extravagant systems meet with vociferous applause. It is in no small measure because such obstacles beset his path that the psychologist cannot as successfully command his audience as he should, both for his own encouragement and the public good. “Near-science” looks much the same as the true article, but it will not stand the weather. Yet if appearance and the cut of the garment are alone cherished, the product is sure to be popular.

A book about children's books.

In Mr. Montrose J. Moses's “Children's Books and Reading” (New York: Mitchell Kennerley) we have one more addition to the abundant collection of books about books for children. While there is much in it that is sound, practical, and useful, we cannot give it unqualified praise; it is, as the author himself admits, an incomplete and unfinished sketch. Unlike the more comprehensive treatises on the historical, philosophical, cultural, and ethical aspects of children's reading, Mr. Moses gives snatches of these things, and of some others,—all very interesting reading, but in no sense satisfying. One always feels that there is so much more that ought to have been said. The sketch of the development of literature for children from the Horn books to the days of John Newbery and Isaiah Thomas is necessarily sketchy and imperfect, but it is interesting and useful mainly on account of the Diagram-Chart intended to indicate partially “The Growth of Juvenile Literature.” In a section called “The Old-fashioned Library” the later eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century writers for children are dealt with in somewhat fuller detail. But is not the attitude of mind which judges children's books of the past from the present-day point of view an unscientific one? In order properly to evaluate them we should consider them with reference to the conditions in which the children then lived, not with reference to the suitability of books of past times to the needs of the children of to-day. The further history of books for children in England and America is traced in the section “Concerning Then and Now,” which is somewhat poor and thin. For example, there is no reference to *Reinecke Fuchs* (“Reynard the Fox”), so popular in England and all over Europe; and the very beautiful epoch-making series of books for children projected and edited by Sir Henry Cole, of South Kensington fame, and W. J. Thoms the librarian of the House of Lords, and published by Joseph Cundall in England a little before the middle of the last century, is not honored with a line! From the point of view of selecting, editing, illustrating, and the practical details of type

and printing, as well as the literary qualities which should enter into the making of books for children, this series has not since been surpassed; and in no survey of the history of books for children should it be overlooked. The section devoted to “The Library and the Book” and “The School and the Home,” as well as the book-lists in the appendices, have practical value; these chapters are mainly the result of collaboration by experts, whose “wide experience, intimate contact with and knowledge of the books considered, and desire to show a human respect for the tastes of children” entitle them to the highest consideration. There are many slips, errors, and omissions, sadly needing correction, which we have not space to indicate here; and surely Mr. Moses should have known better than to send out such a book without an index.

The Duchesse de Longueville and her times.

It would be impossible to find an apter designation for Anne, Duchesse de Longueville, than the one that Mr. H. Noel Williams has chosen as the title of his recently published study of the Duchesse and her times,—“A Princess of Intrigue” (Putnam). Born of a race of royal intriguers, thrust from a convent into the artificial atmosphere of the Hôtel de Rambouillet and the gaiety of a corrupt court, where her wit and beauty carried everything before them, married to a man twice her age, who cared nothing for her but was wax in her hands for any macecap political adventure, she found herself, at twenty-five, an object of universal homage and a power to be reckoned with in the state of France. Naturally her ambition responded to the spur of opportunity. As fond of power as other great Frenchwomen have been, she seems to have been much less emotional. Lovers, save one, she scorned, valuing personal admiration only because it could be converted into partisanship. And yet in the ultimate crisis her love for La Rochefoucauld (of the “Maximes” and the prematurely published “Mémoires”) triumphed over her loyalty to the house of Condé; she joined herself and her following to the opposition party, and the wars of the Fronde followed. This is the story that Mr. Williams repeats, drawing for his details upon all available sources, both contemporary and modern. His work is issued in two handsome volumes, with many portraits of the Duchesse and her friends and enemies by way of illustration. Compared with some of his previous studies of great Frenchwomen this one lacks vivacity; the figure of Mme. Longueville hardly dominates the complicated picture of the events through which she moved. In part at least, this is due to the fact that, stripped of her beauty and her semi-royal standing, she would scarcely have been of commanding calibre.

The singer of the seasons.

So many and, in general, so scholarly and good are the biographies and studies of the poet James Thomson (him of “The Seasons,” not his “dreadfully nocturnal” namesake) that one hardly looks for new facts or even new points of view in the short critical account

of him prepared for the "English Men of Letters" series (Macmillan) by Mr. G. C. Macaulay. Yet some new facts, as announced in his preface, have been unearthed, especially concerning the production of Thomson's plays, his relations with Lyttelton, and the tenure of his successive posts under the government. More important and interesting, however, than these small matters of detail in a rather uneventful life are the author's contributions, in the way of appreciative comment, toward a better understanding of Thomson as a poet of nature, and a more accurate determination of his influence on the poetry of his century, not only in England but also in France and Germany. "Poetical 'nature-study' in the modern sense of the term," the writer goes so far as to maintain, "had its origin, paradoxical as the assertion may seem, in the first half of the eighteenth century; for it was then for the first time that the phenomena of external nature came to be regarded as objects of poetry in and for themselves." To say this of any poet or poets born and bred in the atmosphere of artificiality and turgid formality that to us seem so characteristic of eighteenth-century literature, is to say a good deal. To get back to nature one would hardly betake himself to the England of Thomson's time. But, at any rate, Mr. Macaulay's discussion of the matter is interesting; and the book throughout is suggestive and stimulating. The treatment of "The Castle of Indolence" and the minor poems is as scholarly as that of "The Seasons." As a careful study of a not superlatively prepossessing theme, the little volume deserves nothing but praise.

The home of the Yankees of the southern continent.

A recent volume in the "South American Series" (imported by Charles Scribner's Sons) is Mr. G. F. Scott Elliot's work on Chili. It is mainly historical, though it includes chapters on the industrial and social and commercial life of the "England of the Pacific," as this British author dubs what we Americans are more apt to call the "home of the Yankees of the southern continent." To one not versed in the intricacies of early and later Spanish intrigues, the long story of plot and counter-plot, of rebellion and treachery, of massacre and graft, is neither pleasing nor interesting reading; though it is conceivable that the Chili of to-day is best interpreted in the light—or, rather, the darkness—of her past. The author is not in sympathy with American pretensions in that quarter, and stoutly denies that the United States lent any assistance to Chili in its struggles for liberty—Hancock to the contrary notwithstanding,—and blithely dismisses the Monroe Doctrine as a cause for mirth among South American republics. Chili has an aristocracy whose Castilian lineage is a ground for hauteur and exclusiveness, and for the aristocratical form of so-called popular government which prevails. Her industry and commerce are in the hands of the English and Germans, who quickly become loyal Chileños. No country of the world has so valuable

a working class as the Chilian *inquilino*, disciplined by centuries of oppression and toil, but still sufficiently inspirited to make a splendid soldier. Her vast natural resources and magnificent maritime opportunities, and the inroads which modern science and education have even now made upon the barbarism and superstition which have clouded her history, augur well for her future.

The life-work of a noted Pestalozzian.

There must be hundreds of Professor Hermann Krüsi's old pupils to whom his "Recollections of My Life" (Grafton Press), edited by Mrs. Elizabeth Sheldon Alling, will be a most welcome and interesting book. Born in Switzerland in 1817, the son of that Hermann Krüsi who attained something more than local fame as the disciple and associate of Pestalozzi, the younger Hermann followed naturally and willingly in his father's footsteps as a Pestalozzian teacher and educational reformer. Switzerland, England, and America were successively the scenes of his labors, but the institution with which he was finally and permanently identified was the Oswego State Normal and Training School, where he taught the philosophy of education, and also geometry and modern languages, for twenty-five years. He resigned his post in 1887, and died in 1903, leaving behind him an autobiography, relating chiefly his rich and varied experience as an educator, and also a more detailed and personal record in the form of a diary. From these abundant sources has been compiled a full and readable account of a man of pronounced character, high ideals, and remarkable energy; and from his lectures and unpublished writings a few characteristic selections have been added. He was associated, first and last, with many prominent educators—notably Agassiz and Guyot, his compatriots,—and his life-story was well worth the telling. An error that has rather strangely escaped the editor's vigilance is a reference to "Williamsburgh" as one of the attractive resorts of the Berkshire hills, where Williamstown, the seat of Williams College, must have been meant. Good illustrations, and facsimiles of letters from Longfellow and Agassiz, accompany the text.

A scientific fish-book for common use.

The latest number in Holt's "American Nature Series" is President Jordan's work on Fishes, a large volume of nearly eight hundred pages, with abundant text illustrations and eighteen plates in colors, including a beautiful plate of the famous golden trout of Volcano Creek in the high Sierras. This work is in the main, but not wholly, a selection from the author's two-volume "Guide to the Study of Fishes" published several years ago. It contains most of the non-technical matter of that more extensive work, and is therefore of more interest and value to the general reader, the nature-student, or the angler, than the larger work. It is substantially a general natural history of fishes, treated from the standpoint of popular interest, but upon comprehensive lines.

Naturally, fishes of importance as food, or sought for by anglers, are given a prominent place in the pages of this book; but one also finds that Dr. Jordan is even more alert to seize upon any item of interest or significance regarding the less known representatives of the finny world. The author's wide knowledge of this group of animals, his comprehensive selection of interesting data, his terse, lucid, often humorous presentation of his subject, and the superb selection of illustrations, all combine to make this by far the most readable and interesting popular natural history of fishes which has as yet been published.

*Letters of
a German
composer.*

A selection, in excellent English rendering, from Schumann's best and liveliest letters is not a volume to be lightly dismissed by the reviewer. In "The Letters of Robert Schumann" (Dutton), as selected and edited by Dr. Karl Storek and translated by Miss Hannah Bryant, we have, in reasonably small compass, a very winning presentation of the composer's artistic, sentimental, and romantic ideals and enthusiasms. The earlier letters, from Leipzig and Heidelberg, mostly to his mother at home in Zwickau, are full of the emotions and aspirations and amiable conceits of a gifted and imaginative youth; the letters to his sweetheart and future wife, Clara Wieck, are tender and devoted; and those to his musical friends illustrate his progress and his tastes in his chosen calling. Schumann matured early, but there is an amusing mannishness about some of his student letters, as in this extract from a Heidelberg letter to his mother, the writer being but nineteen years old: "I think it is a pity for a young man to come to a town where the student holds undisputed sway. A young man of any grit develops best under a system of repression, and this perpetual lounging with no one but students limits his mental outlook, and injures him incalculably for practical life. . . . Fortunately I am sufficiently sobered to value things at their proper worth. I should certainly let any son of mine study one year at Heidelberg and three at Leipzig." A not too pronounced flavor of the *sinnreich*, the *gefühlvoll*, the *schwärmerisch* even, pervades the letters, in a pleasant way, and gives them an undeniable charm. A portrait of Schumann and one of Clara Wieck are provided.

*McLoughlin
and the story
of Oregon.*

Mr. Frederick V. Holman's sketch of Dr. John McLoughlin is a eulogy prepared in celebration of "McLoughlin day" at the Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905. Proving too lengthy for the occasion, it was condensed for oral delivery, and has since been printed in full by the Arthur H. Clark Company of Cleveland. Although "largely rewritten" according to the introduction, the address apparently retains in the main its original form. It consists of two parts: an accumulation of testimony to the effect that the Americans could not have maintained themselves in Oregon without the assistance of Dr. McLoughlin, and the story of the

conspiracy that robbed Dr. McLoughlin of his land-claim at Oregon City from its inception to the return of the claim to Dr. McLoughlin's heirs, by the State Legislature, five years after his death. The address is written in an entertaining style and with a full knowledge of local conditions; but it is to be regretted that Mr. Holman did not put together all the obtainable data regarding McLoughlin in a more formal biography. About a third of the volume consists of illustrative documents, and two interesting portraits are given.

BRIEFER MENTION.

"A Collection of Eighteenth Century Verse," edited by Miss Margaret Lynn, is published by the Macmillan Co. All the leading poets of the century are represented, and Dryden is thrown in for good measure. A group of Scotch songs and ballads fills a small but important niche in this volume. There are about four hundred pages of poems, and seventy-five of notes.

"The Poets: Geoffrey Chaucer to Alfred Tennyson" is the title of a work in two volumes published by Mr. Henry Frowde. The author is Mr. William Stebbins, and his task has been to set down his "impressions" of about seventy poets (including four Americans), interspersing the statement of his ideas with copious extracts. It makes a pleasant book to read, for it is the work of an ardent lover of poetry, but it is too personal an expression to have any marked critical value.

The vein which Longfellow worked so satisfactorily in his "Poets and Places" has suffered neglect from later editors, but there have been several recent signs of a revival of this species of anthology-making. Mr. Robert Haven Schauffier, for example, now publishes, through Messrs. Moffat, Yard & Co., a volume called "Through Italy with the Poets," which exhibits good judgment in its choice of poems, and makes a collection which every lover of Italy (and who is not one?) must prize. It will be particularly valued for bringing together many beautiful pieces of very recent composition, and for the classified arrangement which makes it useful for specific reference.

It is difficult to understand the *raison d'être* of the book of "English Quotations" prepared by Mr. Robinson Smith, and now published by Messrs. E. P. Dutton & Co. It is described as "a collection of the more memorable passages and poems of English literature, arranged according to authors chronologically," and is provided with a verbal index. The words "passages and poems" in this description indicate the uncertainty of the compiler's aim. Long poems, such as Gray's "Elegy" and Wordsworth's "Immortality" are given complete, or nearly so, but hundreds of other poems equally important are represented by short passages, or ignored altogether. On the other hand, the short quotations are taken rather at random, and the most familiar lines are likely to be looked for in vain. Consequently, we cannot call the book either a good anthology or a good reference manual of familiar quotations. The editor's sense of proportion may be illustrated by saying that he gives us forty pages of Wordsworth and fourteen lines of Byron. The poetry selected is good, as far as it goes, but the selection seems to be representative of one man's taste, instead of illustrating the consensus of received critical opinion.

NOTES.

One of the most important forthcoming publications of the University of Chicago Press is Professor George M. Hale's "The Study of Stellar Evolution," to appear this month.

The Rev. Stopford A. Brooke has just finished a volume of essays upon Matthew Arnold, Rossetti, Morris, and Arthur Hugh Clough. The volume will be entitled "Four Victorian Poets," and will appear shortly under the Putnam imprint.

A life of Alice Freeman Palmer by her husband, Professor George Herbert Palmer of Harvard University, will be issued next month by Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Mrs. Palmer was President of Wellesley College, and one of the leading educators of the country.

Professor Frederick Starr has in press with Messrs. Forbes & Co. a large work describing the life and customs of the Indian tribes of Southern Mexico. The same firm has also in press Dr. George Wharton James's "What the White Race May Learn from the Indian"; and "The Physical Basis of Civilization," by T. W. Heineman.

A book of importance to students of criminology is promised in "The Young Malefactor," a study of juvenile punishment by Mr. Thomas Travis, Ph.D., which is now in the presses of Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. for speedy issuance. Judge Ben. B. Lindsey, perhaps the best known authority on children's courts in America, contributes an introduction. Another forthcoming book in the same field is Dr. Lilburn Merrill's "Winning the Boy," which the Fleming H. Revell Co. will issue shortly. Dr. Merrill is a physician who has been associated with Judge Lindsey's Juvenile Court work in Denver.

The H. M. Caldwell Co. of Boston and New York have been appointed agents in the United States for Messrs. Blackie & Son of Glasgow of all books bearing their copyright, and will publish all the future works of Captain F. S. Brereton, Alexander Macdonald, F.R.G.S., and Robert Macdonald, three of the most popular writers of boys' books. They also announce for immediate publication the following: "A Pageant of Elizabethan Poetry," arranged by Arthur Symonds; "La France Monarchique," by George A. Powell, B.A., and Oswald B. Powell, B.A.; "Benares, the Sacred City," by E. B. Havell, A.R.C.A.; "A Book of Bridge," by "Pontifex"; "My High School Days," a memory book for the girl graduate, by L. J. Bridgman; and "Weiga of Temagami and Other Children of the Wild," by Cy Warman.

Henry Loomis Nelson, formerly editor of "Harper's Weekly," and for the past six years David A. Wells professor of political science at Williams College, died on February 29 at the home of his daughter in New York City. Professor Nelson was born in New York City, January 5, 1846, was graduated from Williams College, studied law at Columbia, and was admitted to the bar in 1869. He practiced law for six years, then went to Washington, where he acted as correspondent to the Boston "Post" until 1888, and then as private secretary for Speaker Carlisle. Later he became principal editorial writer on the Boston "Post," and subsequently he took charge of the New York "Star." In 1894 he became editor of "Harper's Weekly," a position he held four years. His other journalistic work was in connection with the New York "World." He was the author of several books, chiefly on economic subjects.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF SPRING BOOKS.

Our annual list of books announced for Spring publication, herewith presented, contains some eight hundred titles—practically the same number as in the corresponding list of last year,—and offers convincing evidence that the publishing trade has not been seriously affected by the recent business depression. All the books here listed are presumably new books—new editions not being included unless having new form or matter. The omission of any prominent publishers from the present list is due solely to the fact that such publishers failed to respond to our repeated requests for data regarding their Spring books. If they can yet be induced to divulge the required information, the announcements of these houses will appear in our next issue.

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